



86 00758

19  
5-1686  
19 x 27 cm

# **RICHMOND BIKEWAYS PLAN**



# RICHMOND BIKEWAYS PLAN

To bicycle in many parts of Richmond has been an inconvenient, uncomfortable and sometimes hazardous undertaking. For example, in the City's coastline area, which is a scenic, interesting area that can be best seen by a hiker or from a bicycle, one confronts such hazards as broken bottles and potholes in the streets, railroad traffic and tracks, hostile auto and truck drivers, and a general difficulty of access.

As a first step in creating a more favorable environment for bicyclists in the City, the Planning Department initiated the development of this Bikeways Plan, to be adopted as a section of the Transportation Element of the Richmond General Plan. The purpose of the Plan is to expand and elaborate upon existing policies in the Richmond General Plan concerning bike routes and to provide more detailed policy guidelines for the development of a bikeways system throughout the City of Richmond. Additionally, this Plan can be used as a basis for obtaining state and federal funds for the development of bike routes.

The Bikeways Plan was developed by City staff with the assistance of an Ad Hoc Citizens' Committee on bike trails. This Committee, which is an outgrowth of the Mayor's Task Force on Transportation, has met irregularly and has helped to focus the work of City staff.

In order to provide a sound basis for bicycle planning in Richmond, a survey was developed to assess existing and potential cycling activity in the City. The survey has also served to identify the needs, wants and priorities of the bicycling public. The survey was a two-page questionnaire sent to a random sample of 208 Richmond residents who have registered an adult-sized bicycle with the Richmond Police Department within the last three years.

The responses to the survey indicate the following facts. Nearly three out of five respondents were under 18 years old. The average household surveyed owned 2.6 bikes. The most frequent use of bicycles was for recreation, followed by shopping and other errands, and commuting to school and work. In keeping with the predominant interest in riding for recreation purposes, the majority of persons surveyed want bike trails primarily in the coastal, hill and canyon areas of the City. Respondents are far more concerned with acquiring and developing new routes and improving existing streets and facilities rather than organizing biking activities.

## FINDINGS

Bicycles can be used as a viable transportation alternative. Bikes are clean, quiet, do not depend upon fossil fuel and do not produce polluting by-products. They are economical to buy, to operate and to maintain. In a dense urban area, under favorable conditions, a bicycle is faster than other modes of transportation for trips up to three miles. Bicycles can be a convenient form of transportation, a supplement to other modes of transportation and a source of recreation.

*Bicycles as a convenient form of transportation.* Most people do not use their bikes for commuting, shopping or errands because a number of factors makes such use inconvenient. Major inconvenience factors indicated by the survey include: 1) lack of a secure place to park at destinations; 2) risk of delay and inconvenience due to street hazards such as broken glass; 3) concern for personal safety while bicycling to certain places, such as remote areas of the shoreline; 4) unacceptable competition with auto traffic on available direct routes; 5) lack of a direct route to a desired destination; and 6) unwillingness to arrive at a desired destination exhausted or drenched with perspiration.

A thoughtfully designed bike trail system would resolve some of these inconveniences. However, some of these inconveniences can only be overcome by improved public understanding, acceptance, and use of bicycles for serious transportation.

*Bicycles as a supplement to other transportation modes.* Even in circumstances where bicycles cannot compete as a primary means of transport, they can be used to supplement other forms of transportation. Bicycles can be effective feeders for bus, rapid transit, and ferry systems. But to do so there must be facilities for storing bicycles at transfer points; for carrying bikes onto transit vehicles, and for renting bikes at major destinations.

*Bicycles used for recreation.* Survey responses indicated that almost 40 percent of all bike trips in Richmond are for recreation. For a vast majority of bicyclists, recreation is virtually the only bicycle use. Riding for recreation can include riding to specific recreational areas, as well as riding for exercise or just the joy of riding, with no particular destination in mind. The Survey elicited comments such as: "Because of the difficulty of bicycling in Richmond... there really isn't any joy in riding in (the available) surroundings... If we want a good ride, we take the bikes out of town on our car." Such responses indicate that there is an immediate need to accommodate existing demand for better access to parks and recreation facilities and to develop scenic, attractive routes so that riding to those facilities can be enjoyable for its own sake.

Recreation cycling is likely to become more popular only as more people recognize that: (1) it has the convenience of being as immediate as one's own doorstep; (2) it can encompass a wide-range of ages; and (3) it is healthful, active exercise which can be varied to suit the levels of health or vigor of the participant.

A first step toward creating a more attractive cycling environment would be to designate a system of bike routes within the City. This system could include rights-of-way shared with motor vehicles as well as bike paths separate from motorized traffic.

Bicycle routes can serve a number of purposes. Short links or longer supplementary routes can serve to connect major existing routes and thus enhance the overall utility of the system. Destination-oriented routes can make those destinations more accessible as well as make bicycling a more direct substitute for other means of transportation. Routes can link public parks which may incidentally provide facilities for bicyclists.



Bike routes can be selected which reinforce existing patterns of bicycle use. Results of the Survey indicate that in Richmond a natural pattern of routes used by bicyclists exists as roughly a half-mile grid. This is consistent with studies of rider behavior which indicate the maximum distance riders will detour to use official routes.

The physical amenities of a bike route can be significant in attracting users. Such measures as landscaping and tree planting, providing well designed street furniture, undergrounding utilities, and controlling the use of commercial signs as well as traffic signs and other official signs can be costly but will contribute to a pleasant appearance. City efforts can be enhanced by coordination with CalTrans, which has a policy of landscaping and providing bikeways along freeways or other State restricted routes, and also with the development of related projects, such as recreation areas, scenic highways, vista points, rest areas, and hiking and equestrian trails.

A safe environment is essential for bicycle riding. This concern, especially of adults for their children, was evident in responses to the Survey. Although these concerns appear to be well-founded, recent statistics indicate a downturn in the bike/auto accident rate. Current attitudes toward biking in Richmond would probably resolve most such auto/bike conflicts in favor of autos. For example, autos parked along thoroughfares such as San Pablo Avenue, 23rd Street, MacDonald Avenue are a major hazard and deterrant to cyclists. Often alternative routes can avoid major commercial thoroughfares, congested intersections, or other sources of such conflicts.

The State of California has adopted bikeways standards for physical improvements which are engineered to optimize safety. These standards are largely appropriate for projects now contemplated in Richmond.

The Railroad and Trucking Impact Study, completed in February 1976 by the Richmond Planning Department, found that seven railroad lines have potential for bike use. These routes, in descending rank of probable feasibility are as follows:

- The Beltline from the San Rafael Bridge to Point San Pablo Yacht Harbor;
- The Santa Fe spur along the South Shore from the Inner Harbor Basin to Point Isabel;
- The Santa Fe line north of and parallel to Ohio Street between Garrard Boulevard and San Pablo Avenue;
- The spur within the street right-of-way along the south side of Cutting Boulevard between South 4th Street and Canal Boulevard;
- The Garrard Boulevard, Potrero Point, Canal Boulevard loop;
- The Southern Pacific mainline; and
- The Beltline from Point San Pablo Yacht Harbor through the Standard Oil Refinery to the BART yard.

Richmond has a heterogeneous bicycling population. Although there are sub-groups with differing interests and priorities, bike routes can be selected and projects designed where the benefits to one group will not be at the expense of another. Two significant groups are particularly dependent upon bicycle use: the poor and the young. These are the people who stand to benefit most from a good bikeways system because it will expand their physical mobility. But a bike commute to work can be a viable option for anyone living and working in Richmond.

## POLICIES

As suggested earlier, the enthusiasm of bike riders in Richmond persists despite considerable adversity. This Bike Plan can be effective in creating a favorable environment for bicyclists and thus increase the pleasure of this mode of transportation. Richmond's Bikeways Plan consists of certain designated bikeways as well as policies related to the development and enhancement of these routes.

### ROUTE DESIGNATIONS

The routes shown in green on the Bikeways Plan Map consist of both "on-street" routes (indicated by unbroken lines) and separate rights-of-way (indicated by the dashed lines). These designations are to be considered general and tentative, with precise alignments to be determined at the time funds for improvements become available.

Immediate safety improvements for proposed "on-street" routes would be largely signing and marking. Once so improved, these routes should be monitored to determine how well they function and what additional improvements are necessary or appropriate. Possible additional improvements include relocating stop signs, diverting through auto traffic, and altering auto parking patterns. Such on-street routes would not be exclusive bike lanes which pre-empt existing travel or parking lanes.

The numbered routes on the Plan Map are considered high priority and are recommended for early development. These routes are as follows:

- On-street routes
  - ➡➡North-south from Point Pinole through the City of San Pablo via Contra Costa College to Richmond Civic Center, and south to the Inner Harbor Basin.
  - ➡➡North-south from BART to the Inner Harbor Basin along Marina Way South.
  - ➡➡North-south from El Portal Drive and San Pablo Dam Road to Canlon Avenue in El Cerrito, from there connecting with the BART trail at Hill Street.
- Separate rights-of-way
  - ➡➡Point Molate coastline between San Rafael Bridge toll plaza and Winehaven.
  - ➡➡South coastline between Point Isabel and Inner Harbor Basin.
  - ➡➡Berkeley Hills ridgeline between Alvarado Park and Kensington. This route is partially in County territory and would be developed intermittently on existing streets.

Note: The Bikeways Plan Map is intended to replace and supersede bike Trails that are already designated in portions of the Richmond General Plan, such as the Open Space and Conservation Element and the Richmond Coastline Plan. Most of the routes from earlier General Plan documents have been incorporated in the Bikeways Plan Map. Some of these routes were revised, while others were deleted, primarily because of the following factors: 1) earlier maps did not distinguish among hiking, biking and equestrian trails; and 2) information, physical conditions and criteria which were used in developing the earlier routes have changed since the adoption of those documents. While biking and equestrian trails are incompatible, most of these bike trails are suitable for pedestrians.

### DEVELOPMENT POLICIES

The designation of bikeways routes, although important, is only one step in the development of an environment that will enhance and encourage bicycle use in Richmond. The following policies are proposed as guide-lines in the development of a bikeways system:

- Provide a citywide system of bike routes which will increase bicycle access to major facilities or points of interest and will increase the utility of bicycles as recreational vehicles. In order to attract potential users these bike routes should be easy to use and safe and should include landscaping, adequate lighting, street furniture, undergrounded utilities and sign control.  
(Continuing Policy)
- Initiate a program of public awareness to demonstrate the situations where bikes are superior to private autos and public transit.  
(Continuing Policy)
- Coordinate the construction or improvements of bikeways with adjacent development projects, including scenic routes, flood control projects, recreational facilities and residential subdivisions. When an area includes a designated bike route, integrate the development of that route with the development of other projects proposed for that area.  
(Continuing Policy)
- Promote the development of facilities which will enhance the use of bicycles as feeders to other forms of transportation. Promote viable adaptations at bus, rapid transit, ferry and auto system transfer points to provide for bike parking, carrying bikes onto public vehicles, and bike rentals at major destinations.  
(Continuing Policy)
- Encourage the State Department of Transportation to continue its policy of landscaping and providing bikeways along existing and proposed freeways or other State restricted routes.  
(Continuing Policy)
- Increase the safety of bikeways by reducing conflicts between bicycles and other vehicles. Measures taken could include the following:
  - Develop separate rights-of-way for bicycles.
  - Conform to State of California bikeways standards. Design and construction of bicycle facilities should be in conformance with the current edition of Bikeways Planning Criteria and Guidelines, unless recommended otherwise by the City Engineer on a specific project-by-project basis.
  - Design on-street routes which bypass congested intersections and business districts.
  - Sign and mark routes thoroughly.
  - Monitor the success of routes so that their utility can be steadily improved.  
(Continuing Policy)
- Use the generalized routing priorities and selection criteria specified below to evaluate future route selection, development and funding:
  - In accordance with the Plan Map use a one-mile grid incorporating the high priority routes as a five-year development goal. A half-mile grid system would be the ultimate bikeways development goal.
  - Select routes which:
    - Minimize potential for conflict with auto movement and parking,
    - Provide linkages between important routes and enhance the continuity of the overall system,
    - Improve access to major facilities,
    - Use bike routes to link public parks, and thereby incidentally provide cyclists with facilities such as rest rooms, drinking water, public telephones, and air for bike tires. Provide convenient and secure parking in these parks as well as at other destinations which similarly generate bicycle traffic.  
(Future Policy)
- Undertake a continuing planning effort to keep route and facility plans up-to-date. This should include such tasks as:
  - Developing a design backlog of "shelf-projects", which can be quickly implemented when a financial or political opportunity presents itself;
  - Developing a program to orderly pursue funding;
  - Developing a program of promotion and publicity;
  - Developing a feed-back and follow-up mechanism to determine the success and validity of projects undertaken, and to keep abreast of changing needs and wants.  
(Continuing Policy)



- ON-STREET ROUTES } 1st Phase
- - - OFF-STREET ROUTES }
- ON-STREET ROUTES } 2nd Phase
- - - OFF-STREET ROUTES }
- ← 5 → HIGH PRIORITY ROUTES (within 1st Phase)
  - 50-100 EMPLOYEES }
  - 100-500 EMPLOYEES } Employment Centers
  - \* OVER 500 EMPLOYEES }
- E J H SCHOOLS
- PARKS

Note: ROUTES ARE SHOWN THROUGH NEIGHBORING JURISDICTIONS TO SUGGEST CONTINUITY. FINAL DESIGNATION AND DEVELOPMENT ARE LOCAL PREROGATIVES.







RICHMOND CITY COUNCIL

Don Wagerman  
Mayor  
Stanley Grydyk  
Vice-Mayor  
Fritz Allen  
Nathaniel Bates  
Bob Campbell  
Tom Corcoran  
Donald Greco  
A.E. Silva  
Lonnie Washington

RICHMOND PLANNING COMMISSION

Robert Harris  
Chairman  
Michael Vukelich  
Vice-Chairman  
Roy Miller  
Secretary  
William Allyn  
Michael De la Garza  
Zeke Griffin  
Anthony Lobese  
Charles Modie  
Gary Pitts

Kenneth H. Smith, City Manager

CITY PLANNING DEPARTMENT

Charles E. Woodward  
Director

Report Preparation  
Gerald Rasmussen  
Sandy Ruffin

Ron Meux, Graphics  
Marian Miller, Typing

Cover Photo By Ms. Lloyd Englert

Approved by the Planning Commission on July 21, 1977

Adopted by City Council Resolution No. 8-78 on January 9, 1978